



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY KERRY

October 30, 2014

Situation in Jerusalem

I strongly condemn yesterday's shooting of a U.S. citizen outside the Menachem Begin Heritage Center in Jerusalem. My thoughts and prayers are with the family. The State Department is in touch with authorities as we seek more information.

I am extremely concerned by escalating tensions across Jerusalem and particularly surrounding the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount. It is absolutely critical that all sides exercise restraint, refrain from provocative actions and rhetoric, and preserve the historic status quo on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount – in word and in practice. The continued commitment by Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians to preserve the historic status quo at this holy site is critical; any decisions or actions to change it would be both provocative and dangerous. The Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount must be re-opened to Muslim worshipers and I support the long-standing practices regarding non-Muslim visitors to the site, consistent with respect for the status quo arrangements governing religious observance there.

I am in close touch with senior Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian leaders to try to deescalate the situation. I urge the leaders of all three parties to exercise decisive leadership and work cooperatively together to lower tensions and discourage violence, alleviate restrictions on Muslim worshipers, and reinvigorate long-standing coordination mechanisms and relationships that have served over the decades to preserve the historic status quo as it pertains to religious observance and access to the site.